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IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 13, as follows:

An incoming call can be passed directly to the operator subsystem without the user having first been through an IVR interaction and the analysis unit 35 having detected a problem requiring operator intervention; for example, the DTMF decoder 15 may detect an input indicating an issue needing direct operator input. In such cases, it is still advantageous for the operator's input to be masked by being provided through the text-to-speech converter 16 for the reasons already noted, namely to disguise the transfer of the user to an IVR interaction. Indeed, all calls could initially be routed to an operator, the operator then deciding on the basis of their initial interaction with each caller whether the caller can be transferred to a standard IVR script. Thus the transfer arrangement (which in Figure 2 comprised the mode control [[35]] 36, the analysis unit 35, and the routing manager 10) may in certain cases simply provide for transferring a call from the operator subsystem to the IVR channel without providing for the reverse transfer (in which case, the transfer arrangement may simply comprise the routing manager with operator input to control transfer to an IVR channel).

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~~are talking to a human operator, the transfer arrangement being usable by the operator to have handling of a call transferred to the voice response unit.~~

2. (Currently amended) A voice service system according to claim 1, wherein the masking arrangement comprises text response means for generating text messages from the operator, and means for passing these said messages to a text-to-speech converter for output to the caller.

3. (Currently amended) A voice service system according to claim 2, wherein the text-to-speech converter is part of the voice response unit and is arranged for provides providing the same synthesised synthesized voice to the caller whether the call is being handled by the operator subsystem or by the voice response unit.

4. (Original) A voice service system according to claim 2, wherein the text response means comprises a keyboard for operator entry of text messages.

5. (Currently amended) A voice service system according to claim 2, wherein the text response means comprises a speech